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ABSTRACT

Purposes of this study were (1) to identify certain characteristics, influences, and causal factors relating to the school dropout; (2) to determine the extent and nature of the dropout problem among American Indian students in the State of New Mexico; and (3) to bring the dropout problem to the attention of educators throughout New Mexico. A dropout was defined as any student (grades 7-12) who leaves school for any reason other than graduation, transfer, death, or release for early admission to a university. The study included 74 male and 69 female dropouts from 9 New Mexico school districts. It was found that more males than females dropped out; the number of dropouts increased until grade 11; the age at which the greatest number of male dropouts occurred was 17, while more females dropped out at age 16; approximately 29% of the dropouts were released from school because of truancy; 35% were released but the reason for withdrawing was not reported; 14% withdrew because of transfer and/or family move; and the greatest number of males left school in October, while the greatest number of females left school in December. (LS)

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NEW MEXICO STATE INDIAN STUDENT DROPOUT STUDY

FIRST YEAR REPORT

1966 - 67

This study was undertaken by the Division of Indian Education, State Department of Education and conducted in cooperation with twenty-two school districts of the State of New Mexico.

The purpose of this study was initiated in an attempt to achieve the following:

1. An attempt to identify and describe certain characteristics, influences and causal factors relating to the school dropout.

2. To determine the extent and nature of the dropout problem among Indian students in the state of New Mexico.

3. To bring the dropout problem to the attention of educators throughout the state of New Mexico.

For the purposes of this study, a dropout is any student (grades 7-12) who leaves school for any reason other than graduation, transfer, death or release for early admission to a university.

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FINDINGS

Sex, Age and Grade

The number of male student dropouts exceeded the number of female student dropouts. Of the total number of dropouts reported by nine districts, 51.74% were boys and 48.25% were girls. The comparative numbers and per cents for the group studied are presented in Table I.

TABLE I

MALE - FEMALE RATIO OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS
1966 - 67

GROUPS	NUMBER MALE DROPOUTS	NUMBER FEMALE DROPOUTS	TOTAL DROPOUTS	% MALE	% FEMALE
N = 143	74	69	143	51.74	48.25

Students began dropping out of school in grade seven and continued to leave school in increasing numbers through grade 11. The per cent of dropouts from grade 12 was less than the per cent of dropouts from either grade 11 or grade 10. See Table 2.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY GRADE
1966-67

GRADE	7	8	9	10	11	12
N = 137*	1.45%	2.18%	18.24%	24.08%	34.30%	19.70%

* 6 students were unreported as to grade classification.

Approximately one-third of the school dropouts left school during the 11th grade year. Table 3 lists the number of male and female dropouts as reported by grades.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY GRADE
1966-67

GRADE	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
SEX	M - F	M - F	M - F	M - F	M - F	M - F	M - F
	2 - 0	1 - 2	12 - 13	18 - 15	23 - 24	15 - 12	71 - 66
NUMBER	2	3	25	33	47	27	137*

* 6 students were unreported as to grade and sex classification.

Table 4 shows that students began leaving school at age 14 and left in increasing numbers with each succeeding year up to age 17. The greatest number of male students dropped out at age 17, whereas the greatest number of female students dropped out at age 16. At age 18 there was a definite decrease in the percentage of dropouts. This decrease continued downward through the age group 21 and over.

TABLE 4

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY AGE AND SEX
1966-67

AGE	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 & over	*
N = 143	2	10	34	38	28	14	7	5	5
	1.39%	6.99%	23.77%	26.57%	19.58%	9.79%	4.89%	3.49%	3.49%
MALE	0	4	13	24	15	9	5	3	1
	0.0%	2.79%	9.09%	16.78%	10.48%	6.29%	3.49%	2.09%	0.69%
FEMALE	2	6	21	14	13	5	2	2	4
	1.39%	4.19%	14.70%	9.79%	9.09%	3.49%	1.39%	1.39%	2.79%

* 5 students were unreported as to age classification

The administrative reasons for student withdrawal are shown in Table 5. Approximately 29 per cent of the dropouts were released from school because of truancy. 35 per cent were released, the reason for withdrawing was not reported. 14 per cent withdrew because of transfer and/or family move. It is not known if these students re-enrolled in another school.

Of the 69 female dropouts in the study, 6.3 per cent left school because of pregnancy. It was not determined if the nine females were married. More males were released than females for the following reasons: truancy and disciplinary problems. More females than males dropped out because of over-age, however, this should not preclude the possibility that some of the male dropouts were not also over-age in addition to the reason given.

TABLE 5

ADMINISTRATIVE REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL
1966-67

REASON	NUMBER	%	MALE NO.	%	FEMALE NO.	%
MOVED - TRANSFER	20	14.0	9	6.3	11	7.7
TRUANCY	41	28.7	25	17.5	16	11.2
PREGNANCY	9	6.3	0	0.0	9	6.3
DISCIPLINARY	10	6.9	8	5.5	2	1.4
HOSPITALIZATION	3	2.1	1	0.7	2	1.4
FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT	3	2.1	1	0.7	2	1.4
ARMED FORCES	1	0.7	1	0.7	0	0.0
OVER AGE	4	2.8	1	0.7	3	2.1
NO BABY SITTER	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.7
PERSONAL REASONS	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.7
UNREPORTED	50	35.0	28	19.6	22	15.4
TOTAL	143	100.0	74	51.7	69	48.3

It will be noticed in Table 6 that the greatest number of dropouts withdrew from school in the month of October. The largest number of males withdrew in October, while the largest number of females withdrew in December. There were three students in the study who withdrew, re-entered and withdrew a second time.

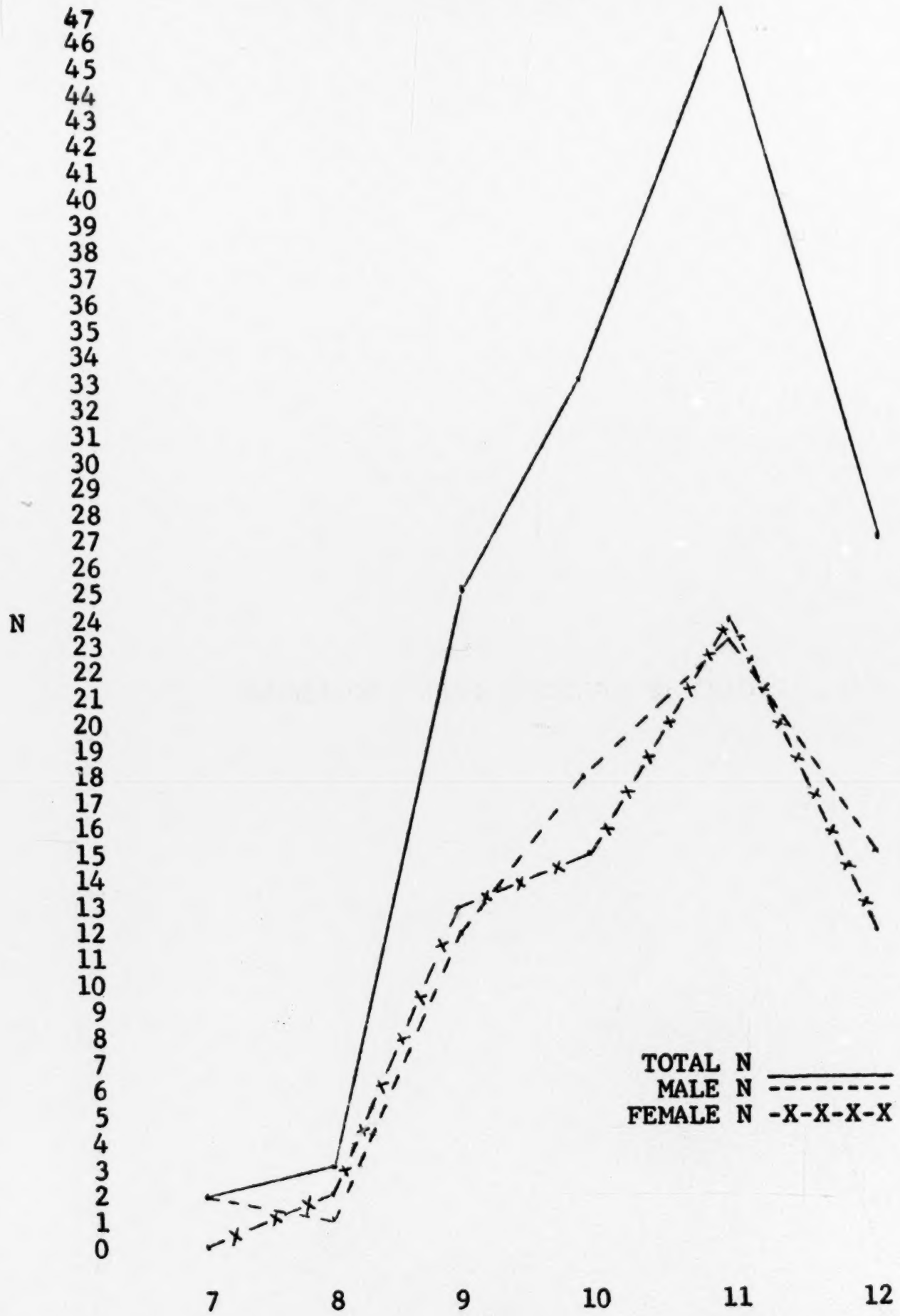
TABLE 6

WITHDRAWAL MONTHS
1966-67

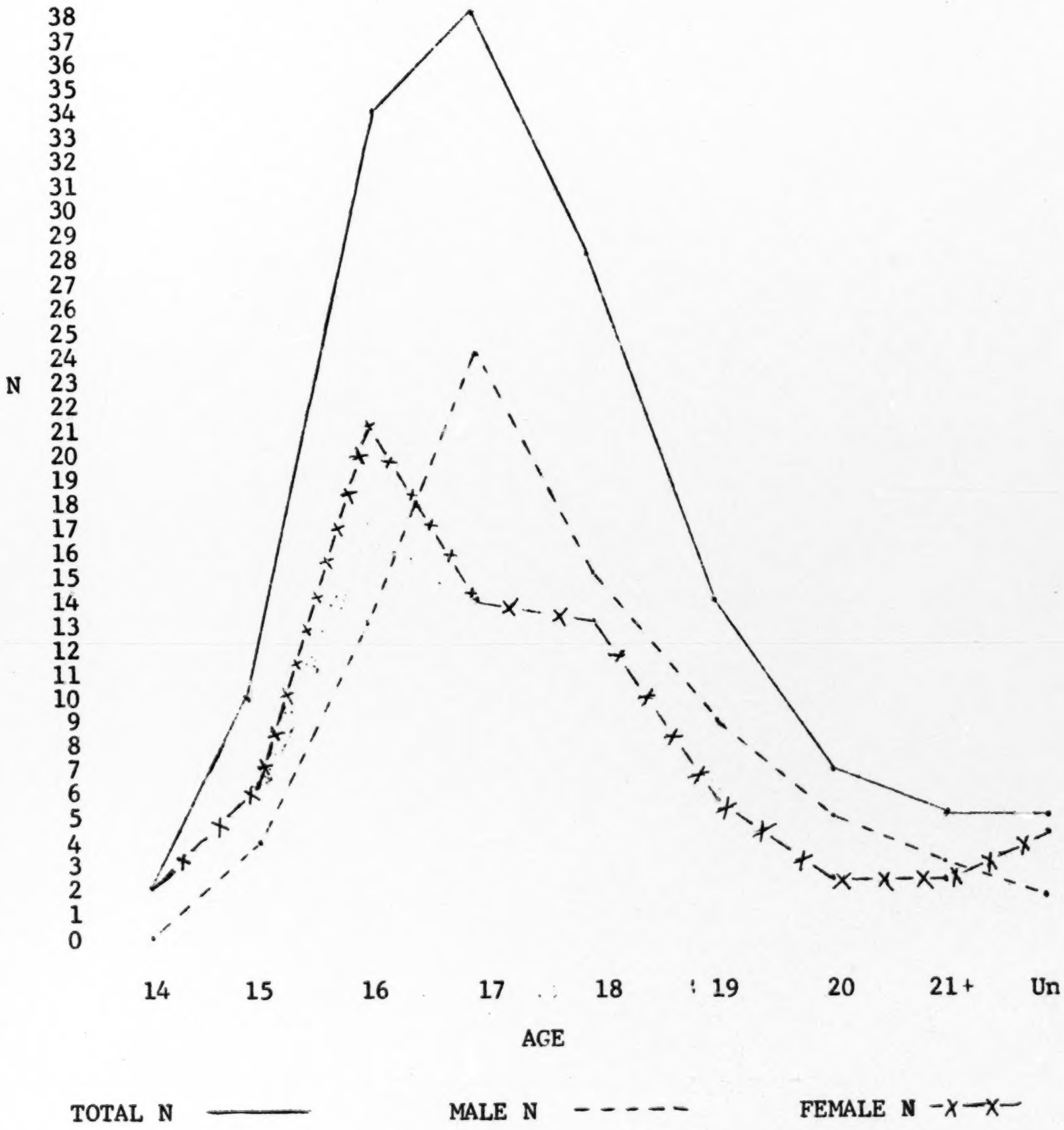
MONTH	NUMBER	%	MALE NUMBER	%	FEMALE NUMBER	%
AUGUST	1	0.7	1	0.7	0	0.0
SEPTEMBER	12	8.2	6	4.1	6	4.1
OCTOBER	19	13.0	12	8.3	7	4.8
NOVEMBER	18	12.3	10	6.8	8	5.5
DECEMBER	15	10.3	5	3.4	10	6.8
JANUARY	17	11.6	9	6.2	8	5.5
FEBRUARY	8	5.5	4	2.7	4	2.7
MARCH	13	9.0	6	4.1	7	4.8
APRIL	2	1.4	2	1.4	0	0.0
MAY	11	7.5	5	3.4	6	4.1
UNREPORTED	30	20.5	16	11.0	14	9.6
TOTAL	146*	100.0	76	52.1	70	47.9

* This figure includes three multiple withdrawals

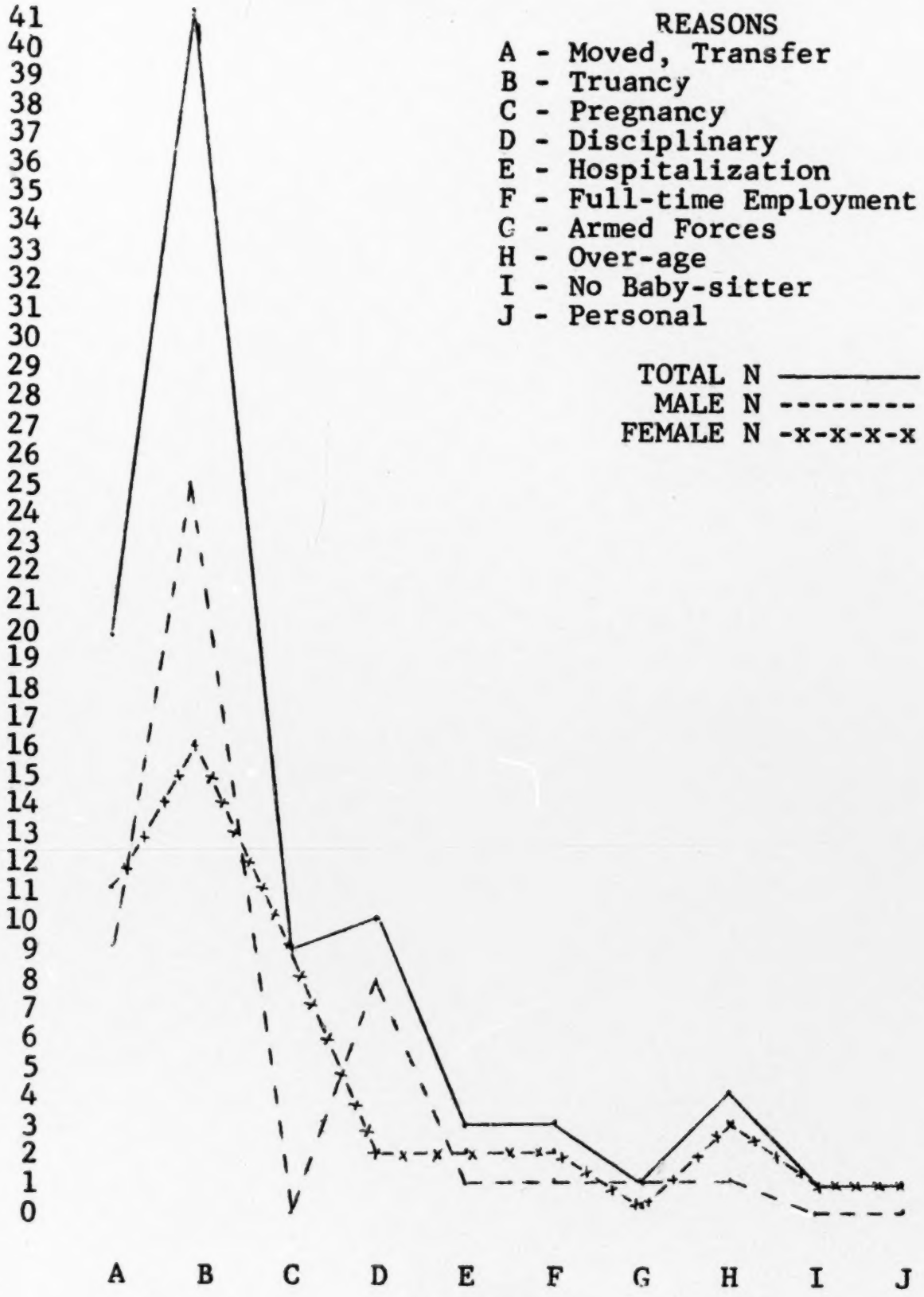
NUMBER OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY GRADES



NUMBER OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY AGE AND SEX

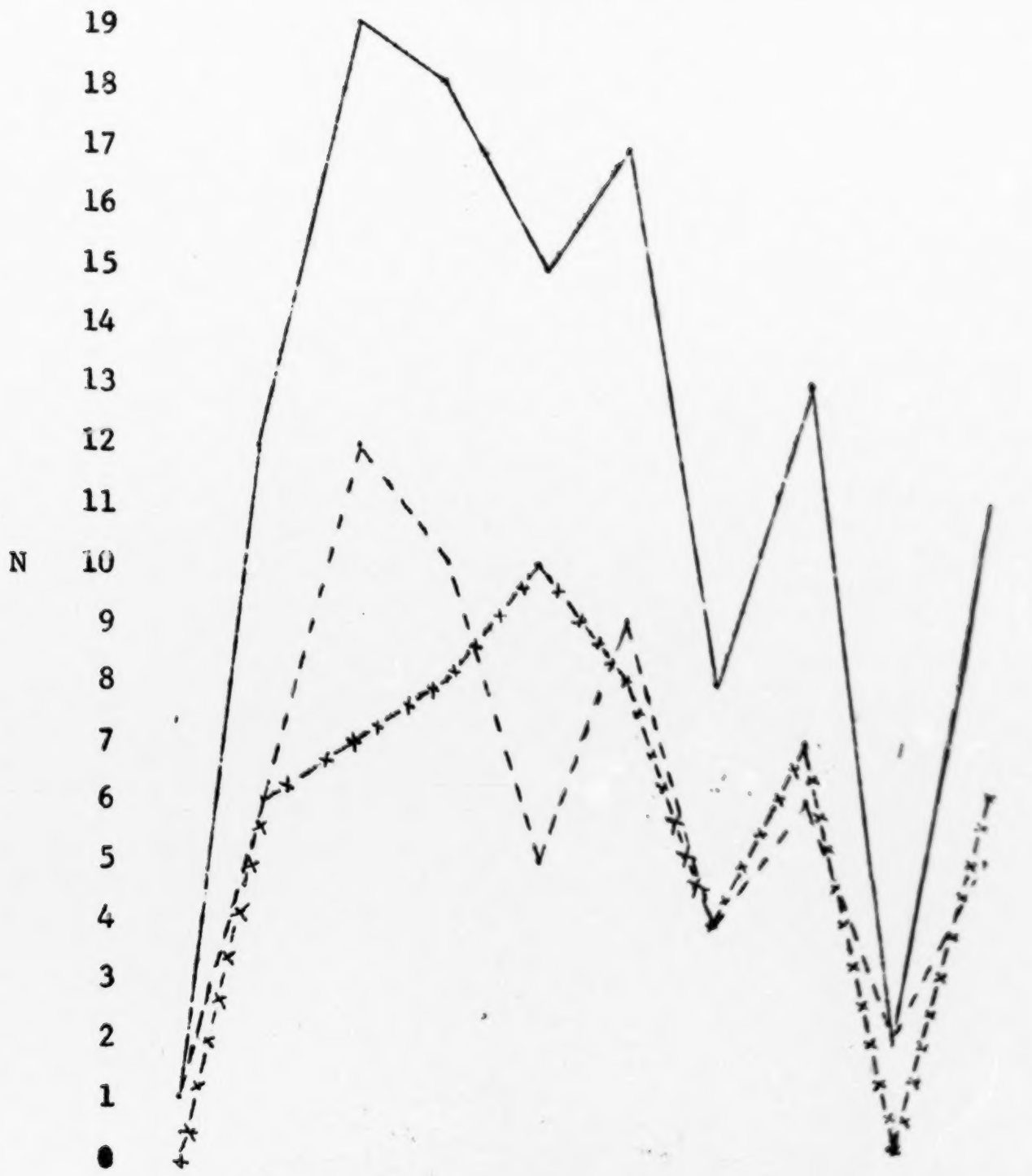


ADMINISTRATIVE REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL



(*50 students withdrawal reasons unreported)

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL MONTHS



*30 Students W/D months not reported

TOTAL N _____ MALE N ------ FEMALE N -x-x-x-x